

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

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LIMDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS QUITO FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY AND USDEL MFM
FROM AMBASSADOR ISHAM

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, HA, US

SUBJECT: HAITIAN CHIEF DELEGATE AT QUITO MFM

1. AS YOU KNOW, HAITI, WITH ITS AFRICAN/FRENCH HERITAGE, IS SOMETHING OF AN ANOMALY IN THE HEMISPHERE AND FROM 1963 UNTIL 1970-71 WAS ISOLATED (BY ITS OWN CHOICE) FROM THE MAIN TRENDS IN LATIN AMERICA. UNDER THE YOUNG PRESIDENT, THIS ISOLATION HAS GIVEN WAY TO A MORE OUTGOING AND RATIONAL SET OF RELATIONSHIPS WITH LA, BUT THE HAITIANS REMAIN UNCERTAIN, DEFENSIVE, AND DEFINITELY IN NEED OF ENCOURAGEMENT, PARTICULARLY FROM THEIR "GREAT NEIGHBOR TO THE NORTH". IT WOULD THEREFORE BE MOST HELPFUL IF YOU OR ONE OF YOUR COLLEAGUES ON USDEL COULD FIND OCCASION DURING COURSE OF CONFERENCE TO HAVE A QUIET, RELAXED CHAT WITH FOREIGN MINISTER EDNER BRUTUS. FOLLOWING BACKGROUND MAY BE USEFUL IN ANY EVENT, AND PARTICULARLY IF SUCH OCCASION SHOULD ARISE:

2. BRUTUS, A 62 YEAR OLD BLACK INTELLECTUAL, IS DISTINGUISHED BOTH AS A HISTORIAN AND AS SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT. HE SERVED AS PRESIDENT STENIO VINCENT'S PRIVATE SECRETARY DURING THE THIRTIES, AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL AND TO THE NETHERLANDS DURING THE SIXTIES, AND EDUCATION MINISTER UNTIL HIS APPOINTMENT IN MARCH 1974 AS MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. BRUTUS, THOUGH CONSERVATIVE AND

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FRANCOPHILE, SUPPORTS THE PROGRESSIVE ELEMENTS WITHIN GOVERNMENT

AND IS CRITICAL OF RETROGRESSIVE DUVALIERIST ELEMENTS WHICH REMAIN INFLUENTIAL WITHIN THE PALACE. BRUTUS HAS INFLUENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT AS A MAN OF RECOGNIZED INTELLIGENCE, HONESTY AND DISINTERESTEDNESS. THE YOUNG PRESIDENT, HOWEVER, HAS A PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEM IN FEARING TO REPUDIATE TOO RADICALLY HIS FATHER'S POLICIES, AND MADAME SIMONE DUVALIER (THE FIRST LADY), THE OLD GUARD AND MANY OF THE LESSER FOLLOWERS OF HIS FATHER RESIST ANY REFORM AS SUBVERSIVE OF ESTABLISHED POLITICAL POWER PATTERNS. BRUTUS HAS TALKED TO ME FRANKLY ABOUT THE PROBLEMS WHICH THE OLD GUARD CAUSES FOR THE YOUNG PRESIDENT, AND THE LATTER'S GROWING EFFECTIVENESS IN CURBING AND DEFYING THAT ELEMENT.

3. DURING THE COURSE OF ANY CONVERSATION, THEREFORE, YOU MIGHT WISH TO INDICATE THAT WE RECOGNIZE THE PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE, THE DIFFICULTIES THAT THE YOUNG PRESIDENT FACES, AND THE SOLID ACHIEVEMENTS (I.E. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND RELAXED POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE) THAT ARE ALREADY TO HIS CREDIT. FYI, TWO PRINCIPAL ISSUES AFFECTING US/GOH BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE A) TREATMENT OF "POLITICAL" PRISONERS, WHICH WAS RAISED BEFORE SENATOR INOUE'S SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON JULY 23 AND B) THE STATUS OF UNFISCALIZED TAX REVENUES FROM THE FAMILY-CONTROLLED REGIE DU TABAC (A STATE MONOPOLY WHICH TAXES CIGARETTES AND OTHER COMMODITIES).

ON PRISONERS, WHAT WE HAVE SUGGESTED INFORMALLY TO BRUTUS IS IDENTIFICATION OF THOSE WHO ARE NOW HELD (OR WHO HAVE LONG SINCE DIED) UNDER DETENTION FOR CRIMES AGAINST THE STATE OR SUBVERSIVE EFFORTS, AS WELL AS EASED ADMINISTRATION PERMITTING PRISONERS TO RECEIVE VISITORS, MAIL AND PACKAGES. SUCH A STEP WOULD DO MUCH TO BLUNT THE STRONG AND CONTINUED CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT FROM HAITIAN EXILES HEADQUARTERED IN NEW YORK AND OPERATING ALSO OUT OF MIAMI (RESORTING IN RECENT MONTHS TO SEVERAL TERRORIST BOMBING EFFORTS). ON THE REGIE DU TABAC, WE HAVE SUGGESTED, IF NOT THE OUTRIGHT FISCALIZATION OF THE REGIE (POLITICALLY EXTREMELY DIFFICULT), THEN AT LEAST THE PUBLIC ALLOCATION OF PERHAPS 20 PER CENT OF ITS RECEIPTS FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURPOSES. THIS WOULD BE A SYMBOLIC STEP IN THE DIRECTION TOWARD FISCALIZATION AND WOULD HELP TO BLUNT CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM. END FYI.

4. SECOND MAJOR POINT TO BE MADE IN ANY USDEL TALK WITH BRUTUS WOULD BE TO EXPRESS SATISFACTION OVER AFFIRMATIVE GOH POLICY
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TOWARD THE CARIBBEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY. HAITI HAS APPLIED TO ENTER CARICOM AND IS OBSERVER AT CONFERENCE OF BAUXITE-PRODUCING COUNTRIES IN GUYANA. THIS TREND SHOULD HELP TO INDUCE MORE REALISTIC AWARENESS OF HAITI'S PROBLEMS, ITS POTENTIAL, AND THE WAY IN WHICH IT MIGHT SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS IN ASSOCIATION WITH OTHERS.

5. ALTHOUGH BRUTUS IS POISED AND ARTICULATE (IN FRENCH,

PORTUGUESE AND SPANISH BUT NOT ENGLISH), HE IS LESS CONFIDENT
ABOUT THE US/GOH RELATIONSHIP THAN MIGHT APPEAR, AND ANY INFORMAL
WORDS OF SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT HE MIGHT RECEIVE FROM USDEL
ALONG LINES SUGGESTED ABOVE WOULD BE HELPFUL TO OUR OBJECTIVES
HERE.
ISHAM

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED AMEMBASSY QUITO.

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